

PS 2179

.K3

1887

Copy 1

✓
Nicol KING'S

POEMS

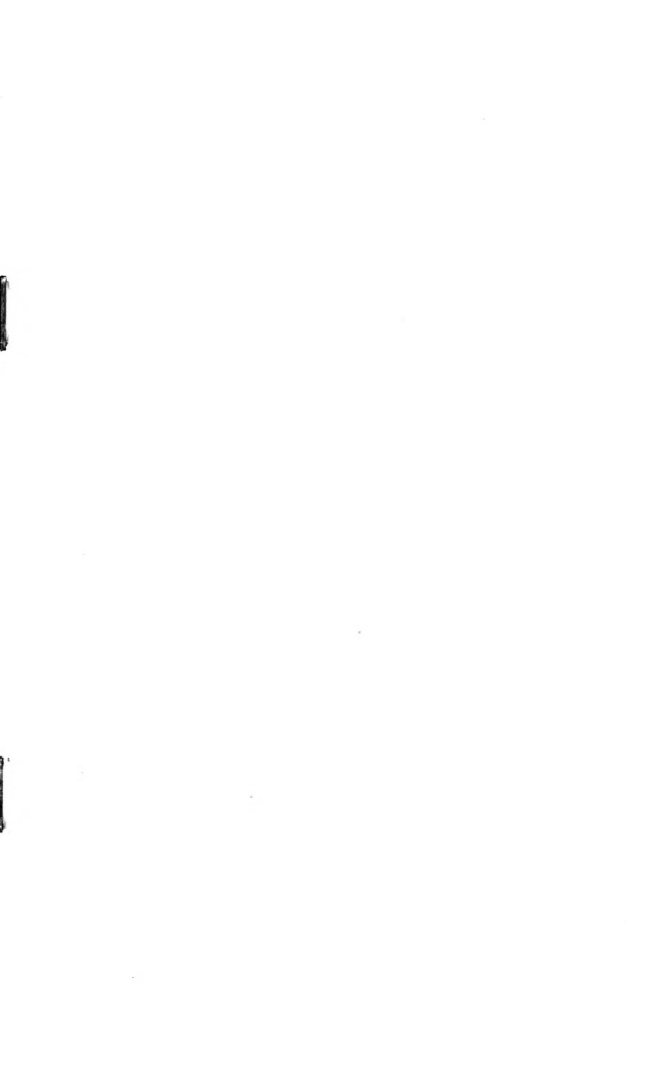
SECOND EDITION

Copyrighted by the Author, 1887

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

MARSHALLTOWN, IA.:
MILLER BROS., PUBLISHERS
1887.





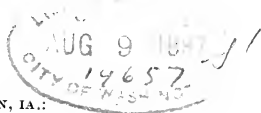
LINCOLN KING'S
POEMS

SECOND EDITION

Copyrighted by the Author, 1887

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

MARSHALLTOWN, IA.:
MILLER BROS., PUBLISHERS
1887.



PS 2179

.K3

1887

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year one
thousand, eight hundred and eighty-seven.

BY LINCOLN KING.

In the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

TO
THE UNFORTUNATE AND THE OPPRESSED,
THIS HUMBLE VOLUME
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

❧PREFACE.❧

This small volume is published with the hope that it may comfort and encourage them to whom it is dedicated,

And if it soothe one aching heart,

Or cool a single burning tear,

the author's work will not have been in vain.

They, who find naught in the work to praise, and whose souls be unmoved by the simple strains, will please be sparing of adverse criticism, and be not hasty to condemn, but let the little messenger go on its way unmolested, and let it do, if it can, the work designed for it.

They, who recline in the lap of Prosperity, cheered by Fortune's fickle smile, may, on the morrow, tread the depths of adversity. Then who will need, more than they, words of comfort and inspiration? Therefore, let not the prosperous scoff at any balm offered to the unfortunate and the oppressed, for "of the day and the hour knoweth no man" when he will mourn, and lend a willing ear to the comforter.



Marshalltown, Iowa, April 10, 1885.

CONTENTS.

I WOULD I WERE FREE!.....	9
POETRY'S CHARM.....	10
OUR HEROES.....	11
PERSEVERANCE.....	13
INDEPENDENCE.....	14
THE STARS AND STRIPES.....	15
WHEN YOU'VE CONQUERED.....	17
DEAL JUSTLY!.....	18
REASON DETHRONED.....	19
MORNING PRAYER.....	20
CAN'T YOU GIVE A BOY A START?.....	21
ROLL ON, O YEARS!.....	22
LIGHT AND SHADE.....	23
THE VOICE WITHIN.....	24
WHENCE COME THE GREAT?.....	25
THE UNSEEN GUIDE.....	26
THE WAY OF IT.....	27
AN ANTIONAL POEM.....	29
WHEN TURNS THE TIDE.....	30
K. OF L.....	31
RIPPLING WATERS.....	33
THE SPOILS SYSTEM.....	34
THE COMING DAY.....	35
TO AN AGED MAN.....	36
THE POLITICAL FIELD.....	37
ON THE ROCKS.....	38
SUSPENSE.....	39
HOW I WOULD DIE.....	40
THE HEART AND ITS IDOL.....	41
STICK TO IT!.....	42
WHAT DO YOU THINK?.....	43
THE SILENT BATTLE.....	45
NAMELESS.....	46
AS TIME ROLLS ON.....	47
THIS DAY WE PART	48

A TRANSFORMATION SCENE.....	49
TO-DAY.....	50
WHEN YOU ARE DOWN.....	51
BLEST BE THOSE DREAMS!.....	52
MUSIC OF THE TUB.....	53
A CENTURY HENCE.....	54
SONG OF THE BROOK.....	55
THE SUICIDE.....	56
DEATH OF AN ECCENTRIC.....	57
HOPE ON!.....	58
THE CONQUEROR.....	59
LOVE IS VAIN.....	61
DEVOTION.....	63
TO SLEEP.....	64
DREAMING.....	65
BREAKING AWAY.....	67
SECLUSION.....	68
LEAVE ME AS YOU FOUND ME!.....	69
A SOLILOQUY.....	72
THE DYING BOOTBLACK.....	76
STRAY THOUGHTS.....	80
AUTHOR'S NOTES.....	85

I WOULD I WERE FREE!¹

I would I could sever the bonds
That girdle my soul about !
I would dash them away, and forever and aye
I would let my soul flow out—
Flow out in verse and song,
In melody's sweet refrain.
With musical chime and poetical rhyme
I would banish all thoughts of pain.
I would write upon grander themes
Than man ever had before,
And fill every line with the spirit divine,
And polish it o'er and o'er ;
And the world would pause enthralled
By the grandeur of the strains,
And the poor, distressed, and sorely oppressed,
Would laugh at their galling chains.

POETRY'S CHARM.²

When feelings, which naught else will quell,
Surge, fierce and restless, through my
heart,

I bid my soul with music swell,
Then all the burning pangs depart.

And, deeply moved, I seize my pen,
And rap on inspiration's door,
And thoughts, which ne'er might come again,
Come as they never came before.

Then swiftly and I bidden write—
And, with no thought of gold or fame,
I pluck the jewels from their flight,
Then pause and wonder whence they came.

Their mystic source is sought in vain—
I only know that they are here,
And that their coming soothes my pain,
And lifts me to a higher sphere.

OUR HEROES.³

As we gather now, my brothers,
 To perform our sacred trust—
To bedeck the graves of heroes
 Who have mingled with the dust—
Let us not forget, my brothers,
 While we each our garlands give,
That we have not done our duty
 Till we've honored those who live.

Kneel above the fallen heroes ;
 Lay your garlands on their graves ;
Let an anthem rise to heaven,
 While the flag above them waves ;
Fire, then, three mournful volleys ;
 Reverently bow each head,
While a fervent prayer is offered,
 And the heroes' names are read.

Turn then to the living heroes ;
 Take each soldier by the hand ;
Thank him for his years of service ;
 Give him well to understand
That the nation still is grateful
 For the service he has done,
And delights to do him honor
 For the victory he won.

Stand beside the living heroes ;
Wave the stars and stripes above ;
With blue violets bedeck them,
To bespeak the nation's love ;
Boom the cannon thrice in honor ;
Then in silence bow each head,
While a prayer for them is offered,
And the heroes' names are read.

Thus, my brothers, let us honor
All the heroes, for some day
We can only read one roster—
That of those who've passed away.
Let us, then, to dead and living,
Each, some well-earned honors give—
Drop a tear for those departed,
And a smile for those who live.

PERSEVERANCE.⁴

Who well would play life's tragic game,
And thereby win immortal fame,
Must bear in mind his lofty aim,
And persevere.

Though he may find his labors hard,
And foes would fain his steps retard,
His purpose he must ne'er discard ;
But persevere.

Though he may sorely be oppressed,
And paths of vice may seem the best,
He must with courage bear the test,
And persevere.

Though fortune may upon him frown,
And seen inclined to force him down,
He must resolve to win the crown,
And persevere.

Though he may stumble, even fall,
If he would triumph over all,
He must his flying hopes recall,
And persevere.

INDEPENDENCE.

Have thoughts thine own !
Put ideas to the test !
Grasp firmly what are good—
Forsake the rest !

Fear not the critic's tongue,
Nor e'en his pen ;
But be thou as a man
'Mong fellowmen !

THE STARS AND STRIPES.⁵

O Stars and Stripes of freedom,
Long may you float, in pride,
From rampart, dome and mast-head,
O'er every land and tide.

May freemen ever echo
This patriotic cry,
"The Stars and Stripes forever!
We conquer or we die!"

'Twas for the right and freedom
That first you were unfurled—
To serve a mighty nation
You since have roamed the world;
And now you're bidden welcome
By monarchs, far and near,
And the noblest bow in honor
When the Stars and Stripes appear.

For you have freemen fallen,
On ghastly fields of blood,
While life, with speed departing,
Has ebb'd in crimson flood.
Their loyalty has given
To you undying fame—
A great and fadeless glory—
A proudly honored name.

Though oft have foes endeavored
 To hurl you from on high,
You still are proudly streaming—
 You were not born to die.
Then wave on in your glory,
 And may it never fade
Till beams the sun in darkness,
 And flight of time is stayed.

The men who first beheld you
 Have long since passed away,
And grass has grown and withered
 Above their moldering clay ;
But you are calmly waving,
 And evermore shall wave,
Till sounds the knell of freedom,
 And death has claimed the brave.

WHEN YOU'VE CONQUERED.

Though your bosom friends deceive you,
And with cold disdain they grieve you.
And in dire misfortune leave you,
 Let them go, nor heed their flight ;
For, when dangers, now before you,
Fail to crush you, triumph o'er you,
Ne'er again will they ignore you,
 When you've conquered with the right.

Though your enemies assail you,
Never let your courage fail you—
Think of them who'll gladly hail you,
 When you well have won the fight.
Even they, who now malign you,
And who seek to undermine you,
Will within their hearts enshrine you,
 When you've conquered with the right.

Go where duty's call may lead you !
Go where'er your cause may need you !
Men may pass, or men may heed you—
 Fear no darkness—shun no light.
Never mind who may despise you,
Vilify, or ostracize you ;
For they'll gladly recognize you,
 When you've conquered with the right.

DEAL JUSTLY!

Condemn not him who would do right,
If perchance he should go astray.
Cast not upon his name a blight—
Strew not with thorns his life's pathway ;
For he may with true courage rise
And struggle with himself, and win ;
And he may show, through honest eyes,
The sense of right that burns within.

REASON DETHRONED.

Ay, laugh, ye demons, in delight,
That reason totters on its throne :
Exult that black and hideous night
Shall reign where heaven's beams have
shone.

Congratulate your devil-king
Upon another victory won :
Let fiendish praise for Satan ring,
Because of one more soul undone.

Rejoice that one more soul is lost,
And doomed to seek your dark abode—
Has even now the dread line crossed,
And taken up its cursed load.

Yea, revel in your fiendish glee,
But greet me not with horrid gibe—
Extend your loathsome arms to me—
I come to join your hellish tribe.

And in this vile, infernal place,
I round and round in vain shall run,
Forgetting name, and home, and race—
Forever cursed—damned—undone.

• Marshalltown, Iowa, June 24, 1887.

MORNING PRAYER.

Guide me, O God, to-day ;
Direct each thought and deed ;
Teach me how to work and pray,
And live my creed.

Guide me, O God, to-day ;
Protect me with thy might ;
Teach my erring soul the way
To reach the light.

Guide me, O God, to-day ;
And let a beacon shine
From that haven far away,
That shall be mine.

CAN'T YOU GIVE A BOY A START?

Can't you give a boy a start?

I am little, but I'll grow,
And I'll do, with all my heart,
What I get to do, I know.

It don't matter much to me
What I do, just so it's work.
If you'll try me, you will see
That I'll do it, and won't shirk.

I don't ask you for much pay—
All I want is what I earn—
You may fix that any way,
Just so I can live and learn.

Now my hands are soft and white,
But I'll make them tough and strong.
For I want to do what's right—
I won't be a weak boy long.

I am going to be a man—
You are laughing 'cause I'm small—
If I do the best I can,
That won't hinder me at all.

If someone will help me now,
I will try to do my part
Just the best that I know how—
Can't you give a boy a start?

ROLL ON, O YEARS!

Roll on, O years, roll on !
Your varied tales unfold !
I would reveal what you conceal—
Your mysteries behold.
Roll on !

Roll on, O years, roll on !
Complete life's simple span !
Ay, quickly go, and let me know
The destiny of man.
Roll on !

Roll on, O years, roll on !
Though ills your flight attend ;
And if there be no joy for me,
Then welcome be the end.
Roll on !

LIGHT AND SHADE.

Life is made of light and shade,
Part joy and part of sorrow,
And though to-day be cold and gray,
The sun may shine to-morrow.
Then why should we rebellious be
When tempests gather o'er us?
Why should we dread, and fear to tread,
The gloomy ways before us?

Life is made of light and shade,
And so it must be ever.
We strive in vain to break the chain—
The two we cannot sever.
Each cup of joy has some alloy,
And pain embitters pleasure.
Each life, though brief, must have of grief,
As well as joy, a measure.

Life is made of light and shade,
And though the soul be weary,
And every night be void of light,
And every day be dreary,
The gloomy mass of clouds shall pass—
The sun again shine o'er us.
The frowning pile shall don a smile—
Our ways be bright before us.

THE VOICE WITHIN.

Listen to the voice that whispers,
Gently whispers, in thine ear,
Urging thee to righteous action,
And to banish every fear;
For that voice will guide thee onward,
Onward to a height sublime,
And thy crown shall be of glory,
Fadeless till the end of time.

WHENCE COME THE GREAT ? ⁹

Whence come the great of every nation,
And the names that shall endure,
Ever gaining brighter glory ?

From the rich, or from the poor ?
Hark ! The world sends back the echo,
"From the poor !"

Whence come the men who make the records
Time and envy cannot soil ?

From the petted sons of leisure,
Or the hardened sons of toil ?
From the world comes back the echo,
"Sons of toil !"

Whence come the bold and gallant leaders,
They who proud defiance wave
To the enemies of freedom ?

From poltroons, or from the brave ?
Hark ! The world sends back the echo,
"From the brave !"

Whence come the intellectual giants,
Such as ne'er may come again ?

From the ranks of high-born nobles,
Or the ranks of self-made men ?
From the world comes back the echo,
"Self-made men !"

THE UNSEEN GUIDE.

I move and speak at God's command,
My course He guides, from day to day,
And when I pause, and doubting stand,
He speaks, and gladly I obey.

No fear have I, and no regret ;
For all that comes I know is well,
And when my sun of life is set,
My past a tale of faith will tell.

THE WAY OF IT.

O, tarry a moment, fair bride of the morrow,
So soon to a loftier sphere to be born,
And you, the proud groom, unless seeking for
sorrow,

Give heed to your course ere the break of
the morn.

And ere the glad peals from the belfry are ring-
ing,

And ere, at the altar, you yield to your fate;
Make sure that no curse upon both you are
bringing,

Or turn ere you find it forever too late.

There's many a snare that awaits the unwary,
Who haste to the altar, with never a fear.

O, well would it be if results we could vary
By branding the altar, "Beware who comes
here!"

A husband who had, ere his troth he had
plighted,

Bright visions of home, as he thought it
would be,

Finds, ere the moon wanes, that his hopes are
all blighted,

A cloud on his life, and he sighs to be free.

But pride and his honor, with power restrain-
ing,

Compel him to smile and to meekly endure
What fate has ordained, though his life be but
feigning,

And death seems the only relief that is
sure.

And though his heart may to another be given,
Man says it is sinful this love to enjoy ;
So, like a doomed ship, in a storm, he is
driven—

No rescuer near with his welcome "Ahoy !"

A wife is unloved, and, for sympathy yearning,
Unconsciously lets her heart go where it
will,

And soon in her bosom strange feelings are
burning,

Awakened by love's indescribable thrill.

But that is her secret—the world must not
know it—

And deep in her bosom she lays it away.

Her life is a farce, but she's too proud to show
it,

And suffers in silence, though outwardly
gay.

And he, the proud lover, the first to awaken,
Within her pure heart, the grand thrills of
true life,

Is cursed by a marriage-vow, hastily taken—

Is bound by his honor to one he calls wife.

The wife and the husband, the youth and the
maiden,

All, sooner or later, may love, but in vain,
And dwell in a desert, with hearts heavy laden,
With naught but a marriage-vow causing
their pain.

AN ATIONAL POEM.¹²

Evermore, we are one nation !
Sound it forth o'er all creation ;
Make each mind its destination ;
Teach the rising generation ;
Let its deep reverberation
Roll, with thunderous intonation.
Freemen, without hesitation,
Shout, with firm determination,
"Ne'er shall an abomination,
Branded as 'confederation,'
Drag us down to degradation !
We'll endure no mean relation !
We'll sustain our reputation ;
Save the freemen's reservation ;
Have no change but annexation ;
Keep just laws in operation ;
Work for right, without cessation,
And our country's elevation,
Till the world, in veneration,
Bows before our honored nation."

WHEN TURNS THE TIDE.

The tide is out, the waves are low,
 My boat is stranded on the bar ;
No gently springing breezes blow,
 To waft me to the port afar ;
But winds cannot forever sleep—
 I proudly yet the wave shall ride,
In triumph, o'er the restless deep,
 When turns the tide.

And those who sail by me in scorn,
 Because my boat is on the sand,
May yet be wrecked, by breakers torn,
 And scattered, helpless, on the strand.
That way, perchance, my bark may roam,
 And safe may through those breakers ride,
And save and take the scorers home,
 When turns the tide.

K. OF L.¹³

Hear the sounds of mighty tumult,
From the country and the town !
See the countless weary toilers
Cast their heavy burdens down !
Hear them cry, "No more we'll bear them !
We our tales of woe must tell !"
And they, on their glorious banner,
Place the symbol, "K. of L."

Now they hoist that magic banner—
By its side our nation's flag—
They'll defend them—proudly—nobly—
Ne'er a man will flinch or lag.
Shout they now, "We fight for freedom !
Sound we now oppression's knell !"
And, upon each manly bosom,
Shines the emblem, "K. of L."

"Forward !" is their ringing watchword—
Victory their work shall crown—
Every stronghold shall be captured—
Every foe be trampled down.
Hear them now defiance waving !
Hear the quickening echoes swell !
God protect that noble army !
Shine forever, K. of L.

Hark ! Hear you that mighty chorus,
 Swelling out from shore to shore ?
'Tis the cry of new born freedom—
 'Twill re-echo evermore :
“Woe to all who dare oppose us !
 Soon the world their fate shall tell—
O'er the tomb of all oppression,
 Shall be hoisted, 'K. of L.' ”

Pledged are we, our lives, our honor,
 To lift up the cause of right,
To be ever bold and manly,
 To be valiant in the fight.
Down with treason's fiery banner !
 Hurl it to the depths of hell !
But two flags shall e'er wave o'er us—
 'Stars and Stripes' and 'K. of L.' ”

RIPPLING WATERS.¹⁴

Bright in its beauty life's morning is glowing—
Clear and unruffled life's river is flowing ;
But soon or late shall clouds appear,
And rippling waters be sounding near.

Gently we glide on the breast of the river,
Cheered by the sunbeams that over us quiver ;
But soon, ay soon, shall clouds appear,
And rippling waters be sounding near.

Swiftly we speed—with the tide we are flying—
Ever for peace and for rest we are sighing—
Anon the angry clouds appear,
And rippling waters are sounding near.

Softly the twilight is over us stealing,
Slowly the beauties of Nature concealing—
Anon the gloomy clouds appear,
And rippling waters are sounding near.

Night gathers round us—we pass from the river—
Never again shall the mid-day heat quiver ;
And ne'er again shall clouds appear,
Nor rippling waters be sounding near.

THE SPOILS SYSTEM.¹⁵

Arouse, arouse, ye patriots !
Prepare yourselves for fight !
For there's a day not far away
When we must try our might.
The spoils system, our tyrant foe,
Still rules with iron sway.
Its slaves are legion, and its gold
Has bought unnumbered friends, who hold
Aloof from duty's way.

Then rally for the conflict, men !
Espouse the cause of right !
And we will show our tyrant foe
How patriots can fight.
Strike off your chains ! Resolve to be
By reason ever led !
Be independent ! And the day
Will surely come when we can say,
"The spoils system is dead !"

THE COMING DAY.¹⁵

There will surely come a day—
Happy day—
When ye patriots can say—
Truly say—
“We are masters of the field !
We’ve compelled our foes to yield,
And the tyrant’s doom is sealed—
Sealed for aye !
And the sceptre we shall wield
Many a day !”
Slow but sure, ’tis drawing near—
Drawing near—
And ere long it will be here—
Yes, be here.
Then our politics shall be
From this foul corruption free,
And the world shall pause to see
Our career.
Every foe shall bow the knee—
Bow in fear.

TO AN AGED MAN.

O aged man, with hoary head,
With faltering voice, uncertain tread,
What hast thou done, in years gone by,
That's worn the brightness from thine eye,
And made thee but a battered form,
Like foundering bark in ocean's storm?
Hast thou a life of duty spent,
With thoughts on right and truth intent,
Or hast thou passed thy manhood by
In vanities and misery?

THE POLITICAL FIELD.

The political field is a garden,
Which ever is covered with seeds,
And some of them grow to be useful,
Though more of them grow to be weeds.

Each person who votes is a gardener,
Whose vote is a powerful hoe,
With which he can dig out the evil,
Yet leave the good seedlings to grow.

The field is now covered with seedlings,
And plants that have grown many years,
And a powerful growth of the evil,
With the growth of the good, interferes.

This garden must have cultivation,
Or the plants that are good cannot grow,
And the bad will be rank and obnoxious—
Say, gardener, make use of your hoe !

ON THE ROCKS.

See the ship of dissipation,
 Bounding now so gaily on.
Hear the sound of careless voices,
 Swelling ever and anon.
See her now ! She nears the breakers—
 Hear those sounds, those mighty shocks.
Father, mother, look up yonder—
 See ! Your boy is on the rocks.

Ah, too late ! You cannot save him—
 See the waves now o'er him sweep—
Now recede—but where's your darling ?
 Lost, forever, in the deep.
Day and night you will be haunted
 By the sound of mighty shocks,
Will be haunted by a vision
 Of a boy upon the rocks.

SUSPENSE.

O heart, be still, and dare not yet
 To let a hope, that all is well,
Cause thee to flutter, and forget
 That soon may ring the funeral knell
Of all thy hopes, that oft have thrilled
 Thee through and through, with keen desire ;
Yet keep thy courage strong, and build,
 Within thyself, a smoldering fire,
That, if the signals joyous ring,
 Will flash, and light the noon-day sky ;
But if they mournful tidings bring,
 Will smolder on and, smoldering, die.
O heart, hang still, 'tween heaven and hell—
 Breathe no vain hope, no tell-tale sigh ;
But, stoic like, bear long and well—
 Prepared to live—prepared to die.

HOW I WOULD DIE.

Give me no downy couch,
On which to die ;
No watchers standing round,
With 'bated breath ;
No messengers at hand,
In wait to fly
And tell the listening world
I'm cold in death.

Where fierce and hot the fight,
There I would die,
With weapon well in hand,
The harness on,
While rings a mighty shout,
A joyous cry,
That victory is won
Ere I am gone.

THE HEART AND ITS IDOL.¹⁶

A heart its fond affection pours
Down at its idol's feet,
And opens wide its secret doors,
Its innermost retreat.
Its wealth of love is lavished there,
The fountain flows unstayed,
And all commands the idol fair
May give shall be obeyed.

The idol bids the loving heart
To stop the fountain's flow,
And with its wealth of love depart,
And nevermore to show,
By look, or sign, or deed, or word,
The love which it had shown,
And never let its chords be stirred
By hopes it once had known.

The heart obeys—its doors are closed—
The fount is stopped and sealed—
And love is from its throne deposed—
Affection's tide congealed.
The once fond heart can nevermore
So joyous be, and kind :
A stoic's life spreads out before—
A cynic's life behind.

STICK TO IT!

If you take a position, you think to be right—
No matter how others may view it—
Don't let any know-it-alls put you to flight ;
But stake out your ground, and stick to it.

If you wish to gain influence, riches or fame,
In no other way can you do it,
Than just to resolve you will master the game,
Then study it well, and stick to it.

If you get into trouble, no matter what kind,
And ever expect to get through it,
Don't tumble in deeper by going it blind ;
But pick out a way, and stick to it.

If you wish to so live in your earlier years,
That later in life you'll not rue it,
Don't yield to the blues, or give way to your fears ;
But lay out a course, and stick to it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ?¹⁷

If the sea of life be troubled,
 And the angry billows roll,
And the clouds all darkly gather,
 Like a pall, about the soul ;
Is it best to sadly ponder
 O'er the harsh decrees of fate,
Till the soul is sick of yearning,
 And is left all desolate ?

If life's sea be calm and peaceful,
 Shadowless, in splendor bright,
Lit by morning's gorgeous lustre,
 Free from shades of coming night ;
Should we seek, in hazy distance,
 Some approaching cloud to find,
And, while brooding o'er its coming,
 Be to present beauties blind ?

If the tides of opposition
 Seem about to bear us down,
And, instead of genial brightness,
 We see many an angry frown ;
Should we yield without a struggle
 For our cause, if it be right ?
Should we own ourselves defeated,
 Ere we well have tried our might ?

If the tides of reckless pleasure
 Bear us toward a rocky shore
And the hidden reefs of ruin,
 With the surges breaking o'er ;
Should we ride the crested billows
 Unconcerned, though reefs abound,
Till we're dashed amid the breakers,
 And a nameless grave have found ?

THE SILENT BATTLE.

No serried ranks are marshaled there—
 No bugles wildly calling—
No shells, infernal, shriek in air—
No cries of anguish or despair—
 No dead or wounded falling.

No thundering charge, or wild retreat—
 No deafening roar or rattle—
No breathless thousands wait to greet,
With death, the foe who comes to meet
 Them, hand to hand, in battle.

The battle-ground is in the heart—
 None know when battle rages ;
But foe meets foe, with piercing dart,
And they, who well have borne their part,
 Not warriors are, but sages.

The combatants are wrong and right,
 And fast the heart-strings quiver,
While fierce and deadly runs the fight,
That soon shall overthrow the might
 Of one, whose dart must shiver.

NAMELESS.

To all of us there comes a time
 When we, from those we love, must part,
And music's joyous, thrilling chime
 Is stopped, and sadness fills the heart.
We know not when that time is near—
 It steals up, ere we are aware,
And makes of earth a desert drear,
 And life but one dull round of care.
And yet 'tis best we should not know
 The fate, for us, which is in store ;
For then, too soon, would fall the blow,
 And sunny skies be clouded o'er.
So let the heart be light and gay,
 And live in rapture to the last—
Then let the storm come when it may—
 It cannot rob us of the past.

Marshalltown, Iowa. June 18, 1887.

AS TIME ROLLS ON.

The bloom of youth shall disappear—
The strength of manhood shall decline—
The waiting tomb, the pall, the bier,
Shall execute the will divine—
As time rolls on.

Our parents fond, companions dear—
Our brothers noble, sisters kind—
All that we love, that we revere—
They shall be lost or left behind,
As time rolls on.

And things that are, no more shall be—
Earth's beauties all shall fade away—
And death shall roam the land and sea—
And new life blossom o'er decay—
As time rolls on.

All pain shall cease, all sorrow end—
Remorse shall lose its poignant sting—
All joy and grief in death shall blend—
Oblivion reign o'er everything—
As time rolls on.

THIS DAY WE PART.

And now, goodby—this day we part.
I loved you once, and loved you well,
And at your feet I laid my heart ;
But Satan tempted, and you fell.
And though you say you love me still,
I ne'er can love a truant heart ;
And though it be for good or ill,
I leave you now—this day we part.

A TRANSFORMATION SCENE.¹⁸

See ! Now the curtain rises--we behold
An Arctic winter scene, all drear and cold.
A mighty ship stands out before our eyes,
Held fast in fields of ice, 'neath clouded skies.
Her rigging far above, her hull below,
Are decked with pendent ice, and clothed in
snow.

Then comes a change ! In the twinkling of an
eye,
The snow-fields disappear 'neath a summer
sky.

We seem to be in an enchanted land,
Where gorgeous sights appear on every hand.
We gaze into a glorious, coral cave—
Its glassy floor of water has no wave,
Its walls with gilded splendor are ablaze,
As though a thousand suns had shed their rays
Upon this paradise, to make a spot
That, once beheld, could never be forgot.
About an isle, where fairy forms abide,
Two lovely water-nymphs are seen to glide
In boats, which are but shells, each lightly
drawn

By a beautiful and gently-gliding swan.
All lost in admiration is the crowd—
It now sends forth applause both long and
loud.

Chicago, December 26, 1880.

TO-DAY.

Live only for to-day—
 The morrow leave to God—
Nor from the present turn away,
To oft, or longingly, survey
 The path which thou hast trod.
Then push thy work to-day,
 That when the day is done,
Thou mayest, well and truly, say
“The morning looked upon the fray,
 And eve, the battle won.”

WHEN YOU ARE DOWN.

O, when you can sit on the keystone of wealth,
And jingle your coffers of gold,
Then many surround you, and drink to your
health—

Their friendship you easily hold.
They swear you're a genius, and almost a god—
An emperor, all but the crown—
To please you, they humble themselves to the
sod—

But how is it when you are down?

And when you are perched on the loftiest
round,

That's in the great ladder of fame,
Your friends, they are legion, they ever
abound,

Delighting to honor your name.
And many and great are the deeds you have
done—

Of glory they weave you a crown,
That shines with a splendor that rivals the
sun—

But how is it when you are down?

And when you're in power, you're courted and
praised,

And riches are showered like rain,
And, sated and weary, with faculties dazed,
You flee from the favors—in vain.

Your friends ne'er forget you, you know not a
slight—

The cream of the country and town
Is lavished upon you, because of your might—

But how is it when you are down?

BLEST BE THOSE DREAMS!

Blest be the sweet, alluring dreams,
That charm my restless, drowsy powers,
And, like the sun's long-hidden beams,
Fall bright across my sleeping hours.

O, blissful is their potent spell!
I fain would have it ne'er depart,
But ever in my soul to dwell,
And soothing linger round my heart.

Blest be their memory, though they fly!
Blest be their far-off, waning gleams!
O, dark will be the hour when I
Must bid farewell to happy dreams.

MUSIC OF THE TUB.¹⁹

Rub, rub, rub, rub,
On a lovely summer morning,
When the sky is clear, and the birds are near,
And beauty all adorning ;
A happy mother rubs away,
While in her ears are ringing
Her baby's chatter, while at play,
And the songs the birds are singing.
Her heart is light, and she feels no care,
Her soul is free, as the birds in air,
And of her joy she gets a share
From listening to the music of the tub.
She hopes, ere storms and clouds appear
To mar her joy, she oft will hear
The happy, welcome music of the tub.

Rub, rub, rub, rub,
Till night, from early morning,
When the leaves are sere, and the clouds are
near,
And beauty naught adorning ;
A weary woman rubs away,
While in her ear is ringing
No song of bird, or child at play,
But the song her tub is singing.
Her heart is sad, and a load of care
Weighs down her soul, for the wolf is there,
Right at the door, and in despair
She listens to the music of the tub.
Her hungry children cry for bread,
And she must hear, ere they are fed,
More sad and mournful music of the tub.

A CENTURY HENCE.

The same old spires may tower aloft,
The same bells ring their tuneful chime,
The same old walls may echo oft
The same hymns sung in the same old
time ;
But other forms shall gather there,
By others shall the bells be rung,
And other lips shall truth declare—
By others shall the hymns be sung.
The same old churchyards may remain,
The same slabs tell their mournful tales,
The same impressive silence reign
O'er the same old mounds and grassy dales ;
But other forms may slumber there,
By others shall the paths be trod,
And other slabs may witness bear
That we lie moldering 'neath the sod.

SONG OF THE BROOK.²⁰

I go tripping along through the meadows so
green,

Rollicking all of the day,
And I show to the world but a glittering sheen—
Laughing all trouble away.

With a rippling "Good Morning" I welcome
the sun—

Smiles are his answer to me—
And I'm brighter and happier then, as I run,
Dancing, along to the sea.

Tinkling, Tinkling, splash, splash,
Murmuring, murmuring, dash, dash,
Gurgling, gurgling, rushing along,
Ever I'm singing a joyful song.

Many blessings I scatter, by night and by day—
Loved am I ever by all:

From their trouble, the weary I beckon away,
Charmed by my musical call.

Of the myriads who know me, none know but
to praise—

Rest and refreshment I bring :
I enrapture the world with melodious lays,
None but a brooklet can sing.

Rippling, rippling, rush, rush,
Bubbling, bubbling, gush, gush,
Rumbling, rumbling, dashing along,
Ever I'm singing a joyful song.

Marshalltown, Iowa, 1885.

THE SUICIDE.²¹

He sleeps the sleep of death !
 (That endless sleep)
He fled from life,
 Aweary of its care.
He coolly, calmly planned
 That fearful leap
From mortal sphere,
 Away—he knew not where.

Say not that 'tis a crime
 To seek for rest,
To long for death
 When life cannot be borne.
Why should a man remain
 To be oppressed ?
Who cares to live,
 If he must live to mourn ?

Think you that any man,
 Without a cause,
Would hate his life,
 And calmly seek his end ?
Do not ? Then speak no ill
 Of him that was !
Could he return,
 He might his course defend.

DEATH OF AN ECCENTRIC.

Life's various-tinted twilight round me glows,
And gathering slowly o'er are shades of
gloom :

Anon the shadow deeper, denser grows—
Now blackness shrouds the pathway to the
tomb.

A strange, weird feeling comes upon me now,
And in oppressive darkness I'm alone :
A cold and clammy moisture, on my brow,
Betokens Death's approach to claim his
own.

The struggle soon must cease—my end is nigh—
Destroyed are all supports to which I
clung—

My once enduring powers vanquished lie—
The chords of all my being are unstrung.

No hope have I of life in other spheres—
No ray of light breaks through the stygian
gloom—

I cast one sweeping glance o'er well-spent
years,
Then calmly, and in silence, 'wait my
doom.

O, welcome, Death ! E'en though this be the
end—

Life, at its best, is not a perfect state—
The shadows and the light forever blend—
To reason is to be resigned to fate.

There may be life beyond—eternal—bright—
Or hell, where tortured souls can never
die—

But justice will be done, and right is right—
O earth ! O life ! O hope ! To all, goodby !

Marshalltown, Iowa, 1886.

HOPE ON !

When the sun has left the zenith,
And the twilight hour is nigh,
'Tis with little thought of darkness
That we bid the sun goodby ;
For we think of his returning,
Bringing forth another day,
To recall the world from dreamland,
And to chase the gloom away.

So, when shades of sadness gather,
And there's tribulation nigh,
We should think not of our sorrows
When we bid our joys goodby :
We should think but of the future—
Of a brighter, happier day—
When, our joys again returning,
Clouds and gloom shall pass away.

THE CONQUEROR.²³

From out the ashes of his former life

He stepped, and bade the cold, dead past
adieu.

Thenceforth, through light and darkness, peace
and strife,

He vowed to rule, and to the right be true.

And now, with justice for his guiding star,

And reason for the brand that lights his way,

He presses toward the light that shines afar,

And rules himself with grim, despotic sway.

His soul, serene, unshaken by the storm,

Outrides the fiercest gale, the roughest sea,

And, though a thousand dangers round him
swarm,

It rises o'er them—grand—majestic—free.

He victor is o'er passion and desire—

His duty is his law, his only guide—

Though in his bosom burns a quenchless fire,

It slumbers at his will, whate'er betide.

The tongue of slander ne'er disturbs his rest,

Nor mars the quiet of his soul's retreat:

The poisoned shaft of malice strikes his breast,

And harmless falls, and shivered, at his feet.

The poison weed yields him a honeyed sip,

And from the bitter cup he quaffs but sweet:

Some word of praise is ever on his lip,

For e'en the humblest thing that he may
meet.

Though years be filled with joy, or fraught with
 woe,

 He e'er shall forward march, nor turn aside ;
But tread the path where duty bids him go,
 And backward glance with pleasure, and
 with pride.

No blow can crush, no force can bear him down--
 No harm can come to him who calmly
 stands,

And smiles, when Providence and Fortune
 frown—

 He holds the fate of nations in his hands.

And when his sands of life their course have run,
 And in the sculptured urn his ashes lie,
Then will his grand career be but begun,
 And round the gaping world his fame shall
 fly.

Then marching down the ages, shall his soul
 Direct affairs of men, and mould their
 thought,

And make the wheels of progress faster roll,
 And call to duty men who knew it not.

His praise by every nation shall be sung,
 And omnipresent shall his spirit be,
To comfort breaking hearts, by anguish wrung,
 And light the way for them who would be
 free.

May he be blest ! and all who choose his way—
 No grander sphere can e'er be reached by
 man,

And he, who o'er himself can hold full sway,
 Shall in the train of heroes take the van.

Belle Plaine, Iowa, 1886.

LOVE IS VAIN.²⁴

Ah, who would love? All love is vain—
The fairest flowers bloom to die,
The greatest pleasures yield to pain,
And happy moments come to fly.

Though love be sweet, 'tis but a dream,
From which the soul shall wake, ere long,
To find few pleasures what they seem,
And much in life not love and song.

Though love, inherent in the soul,
Wells up and holds despotic sway,
The tide shall sometime backward roll,
And bitterness shall mark the day.

We love—because 'tis so ordained—
And revel in its wild delight;
But every cup shall soon be drained,
And sadness follow pleasure's flight.

A heart is won but to be lost,
And friendship warm brings much of pain;
And is the pleasure worth the cost?
Nay! Love and friendship both are vain.

O, can there be a perfect love,
Unmarred by thorn, or pang, or chill?
It may exist in heaven above,
But not on earth, I ween, until

The heart is from all passion free,
Till jealousy and envy die,
Till mortals with new sight can see,
And from their baser natures fly.

I sigh for love I know is true,
I seek the heart I know is pure—
These precious gems I know are few,
Yet nothing else can I endure.

I deep would drink of love's delight,
But ere I wake to feel the pain,
I would my soul could take its flight,
And rest in peace, for love is vain.

DEVOTION.

Darling, thou dost love another,
And another's bride would be,
So I give thee back thy promise—
Go, my darling, thou art free.

Once I fondly hoped to wed thee,
But that hope is blighted now,
And because I love thee dearly,
Do I give thee back thy vow.

Take it, for I give it freely—
Go, thy lover waits for thee—
In his fond embrace be happy—
Go, and think no more of me.

Oft, with thee, have I been happy,
And have clasped thee in mine arms,
And have fondled and caressed thee,
And have reveled in thy charms ;

But, too soon, the sky is clouded,
Clouded darkly o'er for me—
Yet, in yielding to another,
I give happiness to thee.

Though my life be sad and lonely,
And the years bring pain to me,
One bright thought shall give me comfort—
“ I have proved my love for thee.”

TO SLEEP.²⁵

Sleep, thou demon, get thee from me !
Till my evening's work is done.
Why shouldst thou intrude upon me
When my task is just begun ?
Go, I say, nor longer tarry.
Get thee back to thine abode !
Nor return to check my labors
Till the midnight cock hath crowed.
Seek thy friends ! For thou hast many.
Woo *them* to thy pleasant bowers !
I would fain hear yon old time-piece
Toll the knell of dying hours.
Visit those who'll bid thee welcome !
Seek the haunts of *other* men !
I would (rather than be sleeping)
Read and think and wield the pen.

DREAMING.

'Tis oft I seek some quiet spot,
Where care, methinks, can be forgot,
And pass the hours in mazy thought—
In dreaming.

I dream about the coming years,
I see them without sighs or tears,
And all misfortune disappears
In dreaming, dreaming—
A paradise my fancy rears
In dreaming.

I dream of fame, of stately halls,
Where sage's footstep, echoing, falls—
The sound returns from dome and walls,
Repeating, "Glory! Glory!"
I dream of haunts beside the sea,
Where none have ever trod but me,
And there, with all my soul set free,
I dwell in bliss ;
And naught e'er put in song or story
Rivals this.

Sometimes I dream beyond the tomb,
And wonder what will be my doom,
When I am done with dreaming.
A vision comes of perfect rest,
And righteous souls forever blest—
O'er all a halo beaming.

'Tis far above the realms of earth,
And entrance there is like a birth,
Full-grown, into a state of bliss—
But, ah ! Why am I thinking this ?
I am but dreaming.

When in a darker mood, I see
But nothing, nothing. Not a ray
Of light comes through the grave to me,
To give me hope of life for aye—
But then, I am but dreaming.

So dream I on, and quite content
To watch these flitting visions, sent
To me, in splendor beaming,
Or wrapped in gloom, portending doom
To lie in darkness of the tomb
Forever—never dreaming.

BREAKING AWAY.²⁶

Breaking away, breaking away—
The heavens, which long have been misty and
gray,
Are clearing, and soon will the light of the dawn
Proclaim that the storm and the shadows are
gone.

Farewell to the shadows, and hail to the day !
And gladly I welcome the breaking away.

Breaking away, breaking away—
No burden or sorrow forever can stay ;
The burden shall lighten, the sorrow shall fly—
The night has been dark, but the morning is
nigh—

The gloom and the shadows are going for aye,
And from the dark past I am breaking away.

Breaking away, breaking away—
The darkness is slowly dispelled by the day ;
The shadows, that long have been hovering o'er,
Are vanishing now, to return nevermore ;
And quiet and sunshine are coming to stay--
My spirit from thralldom is breaking away.

SECLUSION.

Give me a quiet, peaceful spot,
Where Nature, pure and simple, reigns,
Unsoiled by man's polluting stains,
And strife and turmoil enter not.

Where human voice was never heard,
And human foot has never trod,
And, in communion with my God,
My soul can to its depths be stirred.

Marshalltown, Iowa, June 14, 1887.

LEAVE ME AS YOU FOUND ME!

O, John, you act so strange of late,
Nor longer seem to love me.
It seems to me a heavy weight
Of sorrow hangs above me.
Why is it, John? Do you regret
That you to me are wedded?
And do you wish we ne'er had met?
This blow I long have dreaded.

O, John, you know I still am true—
Ah, me! I love you dearly.
To do as once I vowed to do,
I've tried, and tried sincerely;
But all in vain! Give me one kiss,
Then fling the darkness round me;
And all I ask, dear John, is this,
To leave me as you found me.

I once was loved by parents dear—
My home a queen might covet;
With velvet lawns, and fountains clear,
And sunny skies above it.
The parks and drives, the flowers and trees,
The mansion high above them,
Adorned with gems from o'er the seas—
O, who could fail to love them?

A mother's love, a father's pride,
And wealth and lofty station—
I left them all to be your bride,
And share your mean vocation.
Then, disinherited—disowned—
I still had you to love me ;
But from your heart I'm now dethroned—
Is there a God above me ?

O, can I not, by deed or word,
The cords that bind you, sever ?
Cannot your heart again be stirred,
As in days gone forever ?
If not, then kiss me once again,
And put your arms around me,
Then, if I must, I'll free you, when
You leave me as you found me.

O, John, look at our dear first-born—
My boy—O, how I love him—
As wrapped in life's bright, rosy morn,
He sees no clouds above him.
See how he clambers on your knee,
For his accustomed favors,
And, puzzled, looks at you and me—
His voice in pleading quavers.

Then hear our bright eyed, baby girl,
From out the cradle calling—
Her sunny hair, in many a curl,
O'er lovely features falling.
O, hear her gentle, cooing voice—
An angel sent to cheer us—

Dear John, we should indeed rejoice
To have her ever near us.

O, can you leave your babies, John ?
Or from me can you tear them ?
Can you bring awful troubles on,
And make our darlings share them ?
Upon our home, that has been bright,
With sunshine beaming o'er us,
Can you invoke a withering blight,
And make life black before us ?

Cannot the clasp of tiny arms,
Around your neck, awake you ?
Cannot our bright-eyed baby's charms
From out this strange spell take you ?
If not, then once for all, dear John,
Please put your arms around me,
And kiss me as in days long gone—
Then leave me as you found me.

A SOLILOQUY.²⁷

Oft have I been in meditation lost,
In reverie, forgetting all around ;
And strange and varied thoughts my mind
have crossed,
And in them have I consolation found.

My soul they oft have lulled to calm repose,
The voice of pride and envy have they
stilled,
And caused my life to seem bereft of woes,
And all my soul with reverence have they
filled.

All deep and earnest thought improves the
mind,
And brings it to the fount of truth to drink ;
And he who would essay the truth to find,
Must well the art have mastered, how to
think.

Through darker ages, now forever fled,
Vast stores of truth remained to man un-
known,
That time has since produced, as from the
dead—
The hosts of unbelief are overthrown.

But all the stores of truth are not yet found,
And mysteries, that were in days of yore,
Remain, though man may search creation
round,
And will be mysteries for evermore.

When Nature in her robe of spring is dressed,
And all the air with melody is rife,
And everything betokens peace and rest,
O, then my soul is stirred, as with new life.

Where bud the trees, and springs the foliage
green,
And where the flowers gaily deck the sod,
In all the realm of Nature, can be seen

The touches of the Master-Workman, God.

When black, storm-driven clouds are piling
high,

And crashing, deafening peals of thunder
roll,

And gleams of lightning flash across the sky,
Then mingled joy and awe pervade my
soul.

The tempest speaks of God's almighty power
To execute his will, destroy or save,
And man has no foreknowledge of the hour,
When God his soul will call beyond the
grave.

If one be bowed by grief, or racked by pain,
He should be calm, and think 'twill soon
be o'er;

For as the storm exhausts the store of rain,
So storms of life will cease for evermore.

When man has ceased to draw his wonted
breath,

And from the mortal clay his soul has fled,
And vacant are his eyes, and glazed in death,
He then will be enrolled among the dead.

But some, though they are gone, may not be
dead,

But living still in many a human mind—
The light of their great genius may be shed,
For ages, o'er the world they've left behind.

The lives of some are ended when they die,
Humanity sheds not for them a tear,
And in the ground they all forgotten lie,
And naught is left to show they e'er were
here.

If one would make his life a grand success,
He must not to ambition be a slave—
'Tis dangerous such a master to possess,
As 'twill but lure him onward to the grave.

Great wealth he must not struggle to amass—
It brings but care and trouble to the mind,
And it may disappear, like dew from grass,
With naught but disappointment left be-
hind.

He must courageously defend the right,
Though by the hosts of Satan he be pressed ;
And battle for his cause, with all his might,
Until his heart is stilled within his breast.

His character must be his constant care—
His faults he must discover and o'ercome.
To brave public opinion he must dare,
And when he should not speak he must be
dumb.

In idleness he must not waste his time,
But use each fleeting moment ere 'tis past,
Or to success and fame he ne'er may climb,
And sink into oblivion at last.

Though one be poor and lowly, or be great,
He soon must share with all the common
doom,
And for the summons has not long to wait—
He soon will lie at rest within the tomb.

THE DYING BOOTBLACK.

Where am I ? This must be heaven—

What has happened ? Oh ! I'm hurt—

Now I know—I was run over—

Horses tramped me in the dirt.

They were such nice, handsome horses—

They were coming, O, so fast,

And I thought I'd try to stop them,

As they went so swiftly past.

So I grabbed the bits, and jerked them,

And they struck me with their feet ;

But I held tight on the ribbons,

And they dragged me through the street.

But, somehow, I don't remember—

Something must have hurt my head—

What's this place that I've got into ?

I am in somebody's bed.

How'd this happen ? How'd I get here ?

This is such a lovely place—

'Twas a lady in the carriage,

And she had an angel's face.

What's that noise ? Somebody's near me—

Someone's talking—crying too—

Won't you please come up here closer ?

O, grand lady, is it you ?

I did all I could to stop them—
What is it that makes you cry?
Guess my bootblack life is over—
But I'm not afraid to die.

Lady, if there is a heaven,
Will they let a bootblack in,
If of God he asks forgiveness,
And to free him from all sin?

Then I'll pray for God to hear me,
And to grant my earnest prayer;
For I know that I am dying,
And I soon will be up there,

Knocking at the gates of heaven,
And I hope that God will say
That my sins are all forgiven—
Lady, now I'm going to pray:

God, I'm broke most all to pieces,
And I know I can't get well,
And it is so very sudden—
I don't want to go to hell

Just 'cause father is a drunkard,
And I am a drunkard's son.
God, forbid that such injustice,
To a helpless boy, be done.

All the sins that I've committed,
Father taught me, made me do—
Is it right that I be punished?
I don't think so, God. Do you?

If I'd lived till I were older,
Till I'd learned just what was right,
Till I'd had someone to teach me,
And to lead me in the light,
Then I'd make you no excuses ;
But would stand up like a man,
And would try to bear it bravely—
Now, I don't see how I can,
And I cannot die in silence—
O, the thought 'most drives me wild,
That I cannot go to heaven,
'Cause I am a drunkard's child.
God, you made me—made my parents—
Placed me where I could not do
Anything but what I have done—
Now, O God, I beg of you
Not to punish me for being
What you willed that I should be,
Long before I was created—
God, be merciful to me.
You know well why I am dying—
Won't that help to get me in
Through the shining gates of heaven,
And atone for father's sin ?
If I must be doomed to suffer,
Age on age, without a cause,
Where is God's great love, and mercy,
And the justice of His laws ?

God, forgive, if I offend you—
I shall never pray again—
If I've said what I ought not to,
I am sorry, God. Amen.

Lady—O, my head's so dizzy—
It is getting dark and cold—
Hark ! What's that ? It's horses coming—
Ha ! Ha ! Now I've got a hold—

Oh ! They hurt me—but I've got them—
Ah ! They're gone— gone down to hell—
There they'll suffer—death—forever—
Just—because——

STRAY THOUGHTS.²⁶

An aimless life
Is a failure.

He really lives,
Who rightly lives.

To reject a vice,
Is to gain a virtue.

Who toils aright,
Ne'er toils in vain.

The soul
Is purged by sorrow.

Who seeks nobility,
Should avoid flattery.

Who makes no promise,
Has none to keep.

Just pride
Is a commendable virtue.

Down-trodden vice
May rise again. Beware !

Ambition
Is the father of civilization.

Civilization travels
Where genius lights the way.

The loftier the mind,
The wider its range of vision.

The possessor of a noble mind
Will have a noble bearing.

He rules the best and longest,
Whose sceptre is the pen.

Ingenuousness and lofty mien
Proclaim a man a gentleman.

None should covet greatness
Who fear the world's scrutiny.

He who overcomes the tempter,
Is a ruler o'er himself.

Reason lights the torch of hope,
And faith keeps it burning.

Great minds are oft inspired
By the warring of the elements.

The whole world seems to man
Like the narrow sphere he's in.

O, how the soul of man is calmed
By woman's love and sympathy.

O, Nature, when thou art roused,
How awful is thy majesty !

Truth and error, though extreme,
Are frequently confounded.

Care not how rough the casket be,
If you can find a gem within.

Reason is often bound
By the galling chains of prejudice.

Intense feelings and a resolute will
Make a powerful man.

Judge every man by himself alone,
And not by the average man.

Thought is a good whetstone
With which to sharpen perception.

How fast a few words multiply
When rolled o'er slanderous tongues !

Opinions should be formed with care,
And cautiously expressed.

A spoken thought oft moves a mind—
A written one, a million.

Who forms and keeps a good resolve,
Takes one sure step toward manliness.

Do all the miser's hoarded gains
Disperse his cares, or soothe his pains ?

Count not thine age by empty years,
But e'er by sighs and groans and tears.

How few e'er see their youthful dreams
Change into realities.

Think not the heart is light and gay,
Because the lips are wreathed in smiles.

Who calmly smiles when sore oppressed,
Must be of master-mind possessed.

Books are the vaults in which are stored
The world's most precious treasures.

When the light of hope forsakes the eye,
It leaves a fixed and glassy stare.

Who'd have a nature free from guile,
Must learn to frown when demons smile.

The heights of fame are slippery,
And he who would ascend,
Must mind his steps.

Man can not live always,
And ere he has learned how to live,
It must be his to die.

A single, well-planned master-stroke
Will do far more, and better, work
Than scores of aimless movements.

He who sleeps when he should work,
May wake to find himself
Behind the times.

Where one's deceived, it may be years
Ere he can lay aside his fears,
Have faith, and trust again.

If one would e'er triumph
In the battle of life,
He must make a bold onset,
Nor shrink from the strife.

It seems to me a gentle spirit
Follows me where e'er I roam,
And anon I seem to hear it
Speak of mother and of home.

No wounding glance can be recalled,
Or harsh word lightly spoken ;
For souls by them may have been galled,
And ties of friendship broken.

When the hour of death is drawing near,
To still the beating heart,
Need any one feel aught of fear,
Who well has borne his part ?

O blest, indeed, is every man
Who for the right does all he can,
And toils through sorrow, care and pain--
His work shall not be done in vain.

The heights of fame are rough and steep,
And cleft by many a chasm deep--
The road is strewn, from end to end,
With snares for those who would ascend.

We've built up schools--they've built up
men--

Thus have we grown so great ;
For to true wealth and happiness,
The schoolhouse is the gate.

Before us each there yawns a grave--
Above us soon the grass may wave--
We know not when we shall forego
The joys and cares that mortals know.

THE END.

AUTHOR'S NOTES.

1. *I Would I Were Free!* flashed upon the author, like sunshine through a cloud, as he sat at his desk, in his law office. It is the only description he has ever been able to give of the suppressed feelings that have burned within him from childhood, and of that intense longing which has never been satisfied.

2. *Poetry's Charm* was written for the purpose, and in the manner, therein stated. It was composed in about twenty minutes, and its composition effectually conquered the feelings referred to. It is the most curious poem the author ever wrote for the purpose of finding relief, though he has written many times with that object in view.

3. *Our Heroes* was conceived and written in the morning, before rising, and completed in less than two hours. It was delivered by the author, at Marshalltown, Iowa, on Decoration Day, 1887, and it touched the hearts of the veterans.

4. *Perseverance* is one of the author's earlier poems, having been written while he was yet in his teens, but it has been a source of comfort and inspiration to him, as well as others, and has helped to carry him through many of the trials of later years.

5. *The Stars and Stripes* was written in the fall of 1879, and contained six stanzas, but one was cut out before the first edition was published. At that time, the author did not write as incisively as in later years, and this poem, unlike many written afterward, was not written at a single sitting, but required several days of hard work.

6. *Dea! Justly* was originally written in an album, but the sentiment seemed worthy of publication, and as it contained nothing private or personal, it has been made a part of the author's standard work. It is the author's rule not to publish anything composed for albums, and this is an exception to the rule.

7. *Morning Prayer* was composed while the author was lying on his bed, suffering an attack of earache, and under great stress of circumstances in business matters. It was uttered as an earnest and heartfelt prayer, and has been much used since.

8. *Light and Shade* seems to be a favorite among people of large experience, especially the ladies, and many critics have placed it among the best of the twenty-two poems in the first edition.

9. *Whence Come The Great?* The short lines, read together, give a concise answer to the question. Considerable time and hard work were put on this poem, to secure the peculiar and interwoven construction.

10. *The Unseen Guide* was composed while riding along a country road, one Sunday evening. It came in a moment, and is a concise statement of the matter involved.

11. *The Way of it* was written to call special attention and thought to the evils resulting from hasty and improper marriages, and with the hope that it might have an influence for good, by causing unmarried people to more carefully consider the subject, and to realize the effect of a mistake in the choice of a life partner.

12. *An Ational Poem* was written when there was a spirited discussion, by the American press, of the question whether we are, or are not, a nation. Sixty lines were written, but only twenty preserved. Since the first edition was printed, it has been revised somewhat, to correct irregularities in measure, but the thoughts expressed are not changed.

13. *K. of L.* was written in the author's building factory, when he was in the midst of great business complications. It required a little less than two hours to complete it.

14. *Rippling Waters* represents the five stages—infancy, youth, prime, old age, and death.

15. *The Spoils System* and *The Coming Day*. The tyrant referred to in these poems is the spoils system, which is the cause of so much political corruption, and prostitution of office for political purposes. The patriots referred to are the bone and sinew of the nation, who shall stand shoulder to shoulder, and make a bold and determined fight for progress and reform.

16. *The Heart and its Idol* was written in the Tremont House, Chicago, while waiting for a train. It represents complete subjection, the command, and the command obeyed. It came in a very short time, and the original draft has not been altered.

17. *What do You Think?* presents four situations in life, and answering the questions with an emphatic and heartfelt "No!" will take one a long way toward safety, peace and happiness.

18. *A Transformation Scene* faintly describes a scene witnessed in Chicago, Christmas night, 1880. It was written the next morning at No. 91, 37th street, in a room in which the author was then "batching." The room contained no fire, and when this poem was written he had to wear his overcoat, gloves, and cap pulled over his ears, to keep from freezing.

19. *Music of the Tub*. At first thought, it would hardly seem possible to write anything on this subject worthy of a place among the author's standard poems, but observation

has gathered from real life the material for the two pictures drawn, and they may prove worthy of more than a passing thought. It was written in a few minutes, within sight and hearing of the tub which suggested it.

20. *Song of the Brook* is intended to represent a noble character, having a cheerful and philanthropic disposition, and scattering comfort, pleasure and encouragement among all with whom it comes in contact.

21. *The Suicide* was written in the Transit House, Union Stock Yards, Chicago, in the fall of 1880, on reading a newspaper account of a suicide's death. Five stanzas were written, but two were cut out, several years later.

22. *Hope on* was written in the summer of 1881, while taking an evening stroll among the packing houses at the Stock Yards, Chicago.

23. *The Conqueror* was written to convey to the girls and boys of our country a distinct idea of a bold, strong and influential character, worthy of being used by them as a model; and it is hoped that if it be so used, it will stimulate to noble action, and have an influence only for good.

24. *Love is Vain* is not intended to be cynical, though considered in one light it may appear to be so. It is designed to establish the idea that nothing worldly can give perfect and enduring satisfaction, not even a perfect love. And it is intended as a reminder of that void created in the soul which can only be filled by something from outside this worldly existence, and which can endure forever.

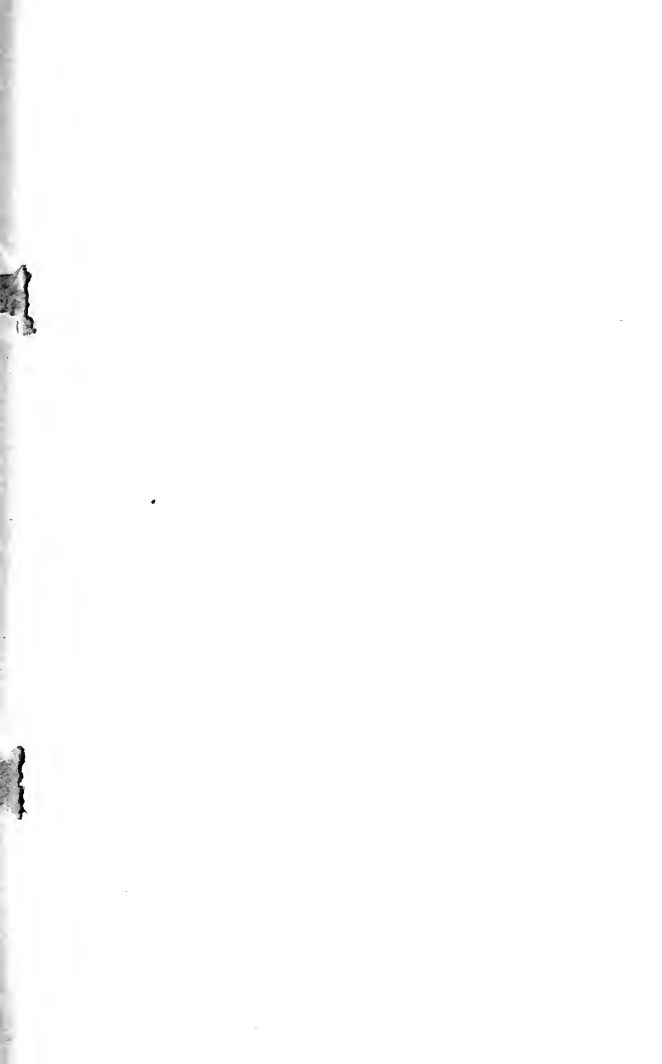
25. *To Sleep* was written early in 1880. It was then the author's habit to sit and ponder till late at night, and often into the early hours of the morning. One evening, as he sat, thinking, he was overpowered by sleep, after a long and desperate struggle to continue his train of thought. He was awakened by hearing the clock strike eleven, and with an effort roused himself, and wrote the above rebuke to his tormentor. Six stanzas were written, but four were destroyed a few hours afterward. The two stanzas preserved were the first written, and embraced the whole subject, hence the rejection of the balance. It has always been the author's habit to write all he feels inclined to while the inspiration is upon him, then, after sleeping, to turn critic, and put his work through severe and merciless examinations.

26. *Breaking Away* was written early in 1887, and refers to changes taking place in both worldly and spiritual matters.

27. *A Soliloquy* is the author's first poem, and was written in the spring of 1879, in a rural school district (No. 4) in State Centre Township, Marshall County, Iowa, while he was teaching. He was then eighteen years of age. Its construction required nearly two months. Most of it was composed during his mile walks to and from school, and his communion with Nature, during those walks, moved him

deeply, and roused his poetic nature, and from that time it has been one of his greatest ambitions to take a high position in literature. Though this is his oldest poem, now in existence, it is not the first one he ever wrote. When he was not yet in his teens, he attempted poetical composition, and completed one poem, and sent it away for publication, but sent it anonymously, and it was not published. He kept no copy of it, and it was lost. The fact that it was not published, dampened his youthful ardor, and he made no further attempts to write for publication till he wrote his soliloquy, and this time his work was accepted and published by the editor who had consigned his first effort to oblivion.

28. *Stray Thoughts*. Most of the stray thoughts in this edition were written in 1879-80. Many of them are the remains of poems destroyed.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 016 117 850 0